

# WAR AT ITS WORST SEEN ON GALLIPOLI

Gen. Hamilton Tells of Desperate Fighting and Appalling Losses Suffered.

PAYS INDIRECT TRIBUTE TO HEROISM OF TURKS

Difficulties of Maintaining Army in Difficult Region Increased by Submarines.

LONDON, September 21.—How the British and French through the summer kept at grips with the Turks in Gallipoli, with terrible losses on both sides in the arid, congested area, where the gain or loss of a few yards of trenches measured the tide of battle, and the dead lay so thick that a temporary armistice was imperative, is related by Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton, commander of the British forces, in a dispatch to Lord Kitchener.

Covering the fighting in the Dardanelles from May 5 to July 1, the account sheds little light on the general military situation, being mainly noteworthy as a soldier's description of what the contenders endured.

Indirectly it pays a tribute to the gallantry and fighting qualities of the Turks. Gen. Hamilton gives no support to the numerous newspaper reports that the morale of the Turks has been shaken.

## British and French Mixed.

Going back to May 5, soon after the allies obtained their first footing on the peninsula, Gen. Hamilton relates how the commanders, hard-pressed for reinforcements, found it necessary to mix the French and British troops "to an extent even of the French on our right having a British battalion holding their own in the face of the enemy."

Followed then three days of terrible fighting, with neither side achieving anything, the steady advance of the British, says the general, "could be followed by the sparkle of bayonets until the long lines entered smoke clouds. The French first made no move; then, drums beating and bugles sounding the charge, they suddenly darted forward in a stream of skirmishers, which seemed for a moment to cover the whole southern face of the ridge of Kereves Dere.

## Faced Heaviest Turk Guns.

Against these the Turkish gunners turned their heaviest pieces, and, as the leading groups stormed the first Turkish redoubt, in black bursts high explosive shells blotted out both assaults and assailed.

The trial was too severe for the Senegalese tirailleurs. They recoiled; they rallied. Another rush forward; another repulse. Then a small supporting column of French soldiers was seen

silhouetted against the sky, as it charged upward along the crest of Kereves Dere.

"Not until next morning did any reliable estimate of what had happened. The net result of the three days' fighting had been a gain of 600 yards on the left and a center of 400 on the left and in the center. The French captured all the ground in front of the Turkish positions, as well as the redoubt."

The German leaders of the Turks were able to relieve some of the exhausted men on the firing line after eighteen days and nights of unintermitted fighting.

"During this breathing space," says Gen. Hamilton, "I realized that we had now nearly reached the limit of what could be sustained, and the initiative with surprise. The enemy was as much in possession of my numbers and dispositions as I was of his first line of defense. The opposing fronts stretched parallel from the sea to the strait, and there was a line of fresh battalions against the lines of unbroken barbed wire. The Turkish position was a superlative maneuver battle in the open."

## Armistice to Bury Dead.

In preparation for this, the British commander tells of how he divided the front into four sections; then describes the first fighting up to May 18, when the Turks made a most violent assault on the British positions with forces estimated at 30,000 men under command of German Field Marshal Lim von Sanders himself. But the British held firm, and the Turkish assault was repulsed within open view of the trenches.

"The next four days," the account says, "were chiefly devoted to the carrying through negotiations for the suspension of arms, which actually took place May 24."

On the day when white flags with red crescents began to dot the Turkish lines. Presently a Turkish officer and a British officer met in the middle of the line. An informal armistice was reached and stretcher bearers from both sides began collecting the wounded.

"Meanwhile it was observed that columns of Turkish troops were marching up which the Turkish troops were accustomed to bring reinforcements. As evening drew on the enemy's concentration of troops was observed. It was clear that no clearing of the dead and wounded could be allowed during the night. The stretcher parties fell back and immediately firing broke out."

## No Profit From Attack.

It did not profit the Turks, Gen. Hamilton asserts, as the British guns drove them back. But as the Turks were anxious to bury their dead and as human sentiment and medical science were in favor of the removal of the dead and wounded, arrangements with a representative of Esad Pasha were finally effected.

"The negotiations resulted in a suspension of arms from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 24," continues the report. "The burial of the dead was finished at 3 p.m. Some 3,000 Turkish dead were removed or buried in the area between the opposing lines. The whole of these were killed on or since May 18."

Gen. Hamilton fails to state how many British were buried, but says that both sides observed the ethics of the situation to the letter.

Feverish intermittent fighting during the remainder of May is described, culminating in a general attack on the Turkish positions June 4, which netted a considerable gain, but was a costly affair.

## Swelled Casualty Lists.

"From the date of this battle to the end of June," the British commander says, "incessant attacks and counter-attacks, which so grievously swelled our lists of casualties had been caused by the determination of the Turks to regain the ground they had lost—this determination clashing against our firm resolve to continue to increase our holdings."

"Several of these daily encounters would have been the subject of a separate dispatch in the campaigns of my youth and middle age, but with due regard to proportion, they cannot even so much as be mentioned here."

"During the whole period under review, the efforts and expedients whereby the great army had its wants supplied upon a wilderness have, I believe, been breaking world records. The country is broken, mountainous, arid, void of supplies. The water found in these areas occupied by our forces is quite inadequate for their needs. The only practicable beaches are small, cramped breaks in impracticable lines of cliffs. With the wind in certain quarters, no sort of landing is possible."

Submarines a New Peril.

"The wastage by the bombardment and wreckage of lighters and small craft led to crisis after crisis in our carrying capacity, whilst over every single beach plays fitfully throughout each day devastating shell fire at medium ranges."

"Upon such a situation appeared suddenly enemy submarines. On May 22 all transports had to be dispatched to Mudros for safety; thenceforth men, stores, guns and horses had to be brought from Mudros, a distance of forty miles, in the fleet sweepers and other small and shallow craft, less vulnerable to submarine attack. Every danger and every difficulty was doubled."

BERLIN, September 20, via London, September 21.—The German admiralty is now absolutely certain that the Allan line steamer Hesperian was not destroyed by a German submarine. All the underwater boats which were out at the time of the disaster have now returned to their bases, the Associated Press is authoritatively informed, and it is stated that none of them torpedoed the steamer.

On the contrary, it is said that the admiralty is rather inclined to believe, as confirmation of the admiralty belief, it is pointed out that a mine painted black and white, and which it is declared was not a German mine, was driven ashore a few days ago on the coast of Ireland in the sunk vicinity where the Hesperian was blown up.

Insists It Was Submarine.

LONDON, September 21.—With respect to the German denial of responsibility for the sinking of the Allan line steamer Hesperian, the British official press bureau has issued the following statement:

"According to information in the press, a semi-official statement has been issued at Berlin that it was practically impossible that a German submarine could have sunk the Hesperian, since, according to the war plans, no German submarine was on September 4 in the locality where the Hesperian was sunk; also because, according to a description from English sources, the explosion was of such a kind that it must be inferred that it was caused by a mine rather than by a torpedo."

"Undoubted proof exists that a German submarine was actually in the locality where the Hesperian was attacked, and she was sunk both on the north and south of this spot on September 4 and 5. The explosion was of the type caused by torpedoes. This is conclusively proved by a fair sized fragment of a torpedo now in the possession of the admiralty, which was picked up on board the ship before she sank."

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